1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5
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practice a Mosaic form of Judaism.

4. Occupational hunters: lowland border peoples; negroid ex-slaves; all non-Coptic.

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The occupational hunting tribes are considered the most primitive, as pre-agricultural and even pre-pastoral subsisters on the bush, jungle, river gorges and deserts. Among them are the Woyto, the hunters of the Hippopotamus, which is considered by the Coptic clergy especially unclean because of the similarity to the pig. Jungles like Wolkait, in northwest Begemdir, contain such despised and feared hunters, as does the eastern lowland desert of the Danakil (Afar).

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Considered on a somewhat higher level within these groups are the pastoral nomads like the Somali, some of the Borana, and other southern tribes who, when they are better known to settled neighbors, are equated with class 2. When less well known, they are classed not much above hunters, and it does not matter to the Amhara that the pastoral nomads in turn look down on settled peasants.

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The lowest on level four are the ex-slaves, who are referred to as Shancalla if they look negroid, or the more general "barya", i.e. slave (name of a Sudanese border tribe). Only a very poor person, possibly an outcast, cripple, etc., of the two upper classes would consider marrying a Shanqalla. Nevertheless, because of the aforementioned concubinage with female slaves, there are Shanqalla outcrops among even the Amhara of Gondar. An offspring of such a union not infrequently does marry a Shanqalla woman, after converting her to Coptic Christianity. This is pos-

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825 lope, reddish, more shy.

Ethiopian klipspringer - "sasso", a little mountain antelope resembling the European chamois, with soft, smooth skin. The Amhara is amused by the curious habit of this sociable animal of mixing with herds of tame goats and grazing in their midst, when goats are taken to upper hillsides for pasturage in the rainy season.

[233]

Waterbuck - "defassa", large antelope resembling European red deer in build. Brown color; hers of 5 to 10 usually contain only one old bull. Common near Lake Tana.

Reedbuck - "behor", golden-colored antelope, in bush near water. They like to inhabit a specific small territory, in herds of 5 to 10.

Ethiopian ibex - "walya", very wild, red-speckled, on the dega steep mountains of Semyen subprovince. Not common elsewhere.

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223 Francolins - "qoq" is the generic name for this family of common wild fowl of the woyna dega; resemble the partridge. Boys are adept at hunting them with slingshot and pebble and run after them until both are exhausted.

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Guinea fowl - "zegra" or "jegra", black, lean, fast runner, found near water.

Partridge - "sorän", common on woyna dega. Wild

273 Nowadays

the Coptic priests prepare wine for the eucharist in great secrecy, locked up in the beytalehem", the storehouse of the church, but it is believed that they use raisins purchased from Arab traders.

b. Animal Husbandry

233 The raising of livestock among the Amhara is not directly related to available pasture. The two factors that stand out are the importance of cattle for prestige and expression of wealth; the interrelatedness of livestock with the agricultural ecology and land use.

In the rainy season the valleys are usually waterlogged, and armed peasants take the cattle to the "dega" upland for several weeks of grazing. Obversely, in the dry season when the uplands and hilltops are parched, the cattle is taken to the valley to graze in and alongside riverbeds. Pasturage, "sed", is free--by agreement, usually within the "bota", somewhat vague territorial area belonging to the local church, feudal lord, etc. During the rainy season, the trek upland assumes semi-nomadic proportions at times, ("zallan"), for the peasants may take their wives, bigger children, and households along. Generally, if the fields are very fertile, the pasturage will be more distant from the hamlets. The dry season sometimes causes such severe drought that after the cattle has eaten the stubble off the harvested fields, the growth of calves comes to a temporary stop, there is no mating, and milk is reduced even to cessation. Fortunately

233 the season usually coincides with lent, when milk, as an animal food, is prohibited to the Coptic Amhara, anyway. Sometimes a wooden trough ("gända") is made out of a tree trunk, and after the cows have drunk, the sheep are permitted to use it. Milking is done in a very tightly woven reed container ("gerära") "waterproofed" by smoking (then called "qwacha" or "chocho").

233 423 691 Sometimes a large extended family will try to enclose a reserved pasturage for itself, by means of rock markers, within a "bota" that had been general pasturage. This almost invariably leads to litigation, but it is not rare in districts where landholding Amhara families of long residence feel very attached to a particular territory, e.g. in hamlets near Gondar (Awura, Addis Alam vicinity, Lidäta) and in the Menz district of Shoa.

231 The cattle of the Amhara is the humped variety (Bos Indicus, or, Zebu), which has apparently replaced the earlier cattle of Ethiopia, the unhumped Bos Primigenius.[61]

The hump of the oxen is much prized, and they are bred for it, as well as for strength in plow-pulling, but there is no breeding to obtain good milkers. The predominant attitude is that of agriculturists, not of pastoralists. The hump of the ox is utilized in plowing, to keep the yoke from slipping off; in fact, in lowlands where horses are occasionally used for plowing, an artificial hump of straw, reeds, etc., is made to hold the customary yoke. The hump is also a choice bit for eating, "shänya 251 262 läjegena" -- hump to the brave (warrior), still served to

61. Bettini, T. M.: Die Rindzucht in Italienisch - Ostafrika. Koloniale Volkerkunde, Wien, 1944.

232 these cattle are resistant to diseases that killed off European cattle brought to Ethiopia by Point IV. This immunity includes poisonous grasses as well as ticks. They are resistant to changes in temperature between day and night, thrive on natural fodder of little nutritive quality, and even old cows continue to have calves for a considerable period.

233 Several factors characterize the Amhara attitude as agricultural rather than pastoral, in addition to the emphasis on the hump and the geldin-for-strength instead of for breeding. Herding is not considered a suitable occupation for a grown Amhara adult; there is no cowboy pattern at all, and cattle herding is usually assigned to boys under 12 years of age while sheep-and-goatherding is often assigned to a dimwitted simpleton. The corral is not of strong stakes, but of light, loose thornbushes.

231 556 On the other hand, cattle, especially cows, play an important role in social organization and other human relations among the Amhara. The terms for cattle and for wealth are synonymous. In marriage agreements, the kinfolk on both the bride's and the groom's side promise to contribute an equal number of cows. This means that the child of a poor farmer cannot hope to marry the offspring of a wealthy farmer, under the usual circumstances, unless the rich partner restricts his contribution to what the poor can afford, or unless the poorer manages to borrow enough cattle from a wider range of kinfolk.

To overcome boundaries of social stratification, cattle enables a peasant to present an "entrance gift"

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[556] ("agäbba") to an important "great man", perhaps to become a "client" in his retinue for protection.

[775] In religious life, the old peasant can arrange for the peace of his soul after death by giving a cow to his Confessor or to the "qēs gabaz" the administrative priest [682] of the parish church, to have masses recited. In criminal law, a murderer in the remote rural areas can still save himself and even prevent a long and bloody feud between families, if he can borrow enough cattle, in addition to his own, to pay "blood-money", in cows, to the kin of the victim, the agreement witnessed by the presence of a "chega shum", a judge, or a priest, preferably all three. Thus there are some aspects of the cattle pattern that are reminiscent of a tribal, semi-nomadic, rather than settled territorial social organization. This becomes emphasized during the upland trek in the rainy season.

●233 Though entrusted to youngsters, care of cattle is obviously a task requiring responsibility. Cattle is not taken out until one hour after sunrise, about 7 A.M., when the dew has dried. During the hot dry season, cattle rest under umbrella trees and other shade from 11 A.M. to 4 P.M., so that the grazing period away from the hamlet is not long. Before dusk, by 6 P.M., they are taken into the hamlet enclosure or corrall, or even into the hut, for hyenas may come early.

The cash value of cattle is low, primarily because of the distance and poor transportation to world markets. [281] The hides, a major export item, are of low cash value because this type is not tanned, merely sundried, and "book-folded" for export.

233 folded" for export.

Sheep are raised primarily for meat. They do not figure in social organization except as minor gifts (including entrance gifts). They are small in stature, and so inexpensive that the sheepskin can often be sold for 1/3 the cost of the entire animal. The woolly skins are used as cloaks, bedcovers, etc. The sheep is not bred for wool, only for meat, especially for the fattail ("lat") which is as prized as in other Middle Eastern areas. The wool (yäbäg t'ägur) is not very long, and is used to stuff pillows in urban areas. Wool weaving is a local specialty of remote districts, now dying out due to competition of modern, imported blankets, but formerly used to make the black, Arab-type "burnos". [280]

Goats as well as sheep are usually entrusted to an ex-slave or a simpleton, or very small children, when on pasture. Domestic goats ("feyäl") are raised because of the cheapness of their meat, and the skin which is tanned by the Faqi, and made into parchment for church literature, etc. To fatten rams, their testicles are crushed between rocks, and the resulting animal is called "qetqet". [281] [232]

231 Horses are small, wiry and very enduring. They are the animal of the young aristocrats in warfare, in games showing prowess. Mules, small, wiry, and intelligent, cost at least twice as much as horses. They are preferred by travellers and older persons, and are used as the animal of honor ridden by the veiled bride when she is taken to her bridegroom's hamlet. If they can at all afford it, a Senaar mule is preferred, and for the bridal

[MANZ]

29 / *The Legacy of Manz and Gondar*

The history and customs of Manz are more obviously related to its geography than is the case with Gondar. The encircling wall of mountains has been a source of isolation and protection, two factors of great moment in the history of the area. Peculiar eating and clothing habits have developed in response to a climate which, owing to the altitude of Manz and its position at the edge of an escarpment that leads down to a desert of the Rift Valley, is one of the coldest in Ethiopia. The temperature often approaches the freezing point, and in the colder months (October and November) standing in the sunshine at high noon is no defense against a shrill wind that pierces the bones.

Barley is the only crop that thrives in the highest parts of Manz, though wheat, beans, peas, and chick-peas grow in the slightly lower altitudes. But *tĕff*, the grain preferred by Abyssinians for the preparation of their staple food —a kind of pancake known as *ĭnjarā*—cannot be cultivated at those heights, so the Manzē typically eats *ĭnjarā* made of barley.

Sheep are a major item in the Manz economy. The average farm has a herd of 100 to 150 sheep, which provide a heavy wool as well as the Manzē's favorite meat. This wool is used to make the *bānnā*, a warm blanket which is wrapped around the body and constitutes the standard dress of the Manzē. The *bānnā* distinguishes him from other Abyssinians, who wear a white cotton toga called *shammā*. Wealthier men wear the *barnos*, a tailored cape made of dark wool. Manzē wool is also used for the weaving of rugs which ornament the homes of the well-to-do.

No dyes are used in working their wool, so a crowd of Manzēs in natural-colored *bānnā* seen at a distance resembles a flock of their sheep. This is one of the touches contributing to the impressive aesthetic unity of the Manz landscape. The effect is also produced by the fact that the Manzē's house is built of stone, the same stone that is seen everywhere on the terrain; and its conical roof is made of thatch, which makes the roof look like the piles of grain in the fields. The churches are also built of stone with thatched conical roofs. Everything one sees in Manz bespeaks a harmony with the natural environment.

The cold climate of Manz is invigorating. It prevents food from spoiling quickly and discourages diseases which flourish in lower altitudes. The Manzē boasts that his climate keeps people healthy and gives them long lives, and indeed it is not uncommon to find men sprightly in their eighties and nineties. But only the hardy survive, for life there is as rugged as the land, and the people—like their landscape—are stony, bleak, and full of dark recesses.

Manz does not occupy so conspicuous a place in Ethiopian history as Gondar. Indeed, most books on Ethiopia do not even mention the area. While

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

When he has eaten and washed his hands, the children take their breakfast quickly. One or two of them then lead the remaining animals out to pasture—the cows, which have already been brought back and milked; the sheep and goats; the young draft animals. They spend the day roaming the hills with their flocks in the company of shepherds from nearby farms, unless it is harvest time when each must stay close to his family's fields where the herds feed on stalks and chaff.

The peasant leaves with his older sons or manservants for the fields. (If it is a fasting day, they go directly to work without any breakfast.) The day's activity may consist of cutting the ripe crops with a fine-toothed sickle, or threshing the harvest under the hooves of cattle and mules, or winnowing grain by tossing it up in the breeze. More often than not it will consist of plowing, virtually a year-round occupation. For each crop a field must be plowed at least twice: first to loosen the crusted soil, and then to cover up the seed that has been sown. Planting occurs in several months, the schedule varying according to region. In some regions, for example, barley, wheat, and chick-peas are sown in September and October; corn, beans, and peas in May and June; and *ṭēff* in July. In many areas a January planting is also common. The central position of plowing in the world of the Amhara peasant is shown by the fact that the word for his vocation, *ǐrshā*, literally means "plowing."

On plowing days, the wooden plow with its single iron share and the yoke are carried to the field, and the oxen are driven along with sticks and shouts. If it is sowing time, bags of seed are loaded on donkeys which join the procession. On his way to work the peasant is likely to see a neighbor at a distance and cries of "How did you spend the night?" are exchanged. At the field the team of oxen is yoked and the work begins. It lasts for about five hours, and the peasant is indeed wretched who does not have a helper with whom to take turns steering the heavy plow and cracking the whip as the oxen trace furrow after furrow.

The peasant's wife is too busy in the morning to sit down for a regular breakfast, so she takes bites of food at will as she works about the house. There is much ado in the house as she and her daughters, and perhaps maidservants, carry out a variety of chores—baking *ǐnjarā*, preparing *ṭallā*, spinning cotton, collecting dung for fuel, sweeping rubbish off the floor, carrying water from the spring, weaving straw baskets or mats. The impression of business is heightened by the chickens, which hop in and out of the house as they please, though they must be shooed away from grain drying in the sun.

Toward noon a fresh batch of pepper sauce is prepared. If the peasant is working in a distant field, his wife carries lunch out to him—or else risks being beaten with a stick. If he is not too far away he comes home for lunch, which he eats together with his wife. They talk about what each has done in

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

*665 512 462 the morning and what remains to be done. The peasant may retire for a nap, and perhaps to lie with his wife, before taking up the afternoon's work. He returns for about three more hours of plowing after his noon rest. The afternoon sun burns down on him; the plow is harder to wield; he plods on. At home the women continue their work, no sooner finishing one task than they [854] attend to another. The mother puts the child who rides on her back to the [853] breast whenever it cries.

*565 512 233 857 [262] The shepherds do not come home for lunch. They have taken some *ǐnjarā* or *dābo* ("whole wheat bread") along with them. In harvest months they enjoy a special treat, roasting grains or pulse which they have snatched from somebody's field. Though their responsibility is great—a boy will be whipped if an animal in his charge gets hurt or lost or if it gets into fields of grain—their work is light. They spend the day running idly, practicing war chants, playing at various adult activities. Their mood is as free as the great spaces about them. As the day grows hotter they are likely to discard their sheepskin [291] covering and move about naked. Toward dusk, the shepherds' spirits quicken. Their songs become more excited; lively melodies are heard from their wooden flutes. It is time to go home to family, supper, and fire.

*565 512 When father and sons enter after the day's work, they start munching on roasted grains, *ǐnjarā*, or *dābo*. They may drink some *ṭallā* and relax. It begins to get chilly. The room is dark and smoky, the fleas bite them—but it is the easiest time of the day. The family is together, and everyone enjoys talking and hearing about the homely events of the day. A few hours after dark, sup- [264] per is served. Parents and older children eat together out of a common basket. Younger children and servants stand respectfully, awaiting their turn, grateful if someone places a large bite of food in their mouths.

[515] [782] [513] [352] After dinner there is a great washing of feet—the father's by his wife or children, the others' by themselves. The peasant recites or reads his evening prayers and lies down on his bed made of strips of cowhide. The children settle for the night on the clay benches. Last of all, the mother covers the embers with ashes, sets out the grain she must grind before dawn, and places her weary body next to that of her husband's.

*565 512 527 This grueling schedule is not repeated every day. On nearly half the days in each month heavy labor is not permitted—men may not plow or harvest, women may not grind or spin. These are holy days: Saturdays and Sundays (both of which are honored as the Sabbath in Abyssinia) and the monthly and annual commemorations of the saints.

*565 512 527 462 [524] The woman's schedule on such days is only lightened, not radically altered. Food and drink must still be prepared and served. Except for a possible trip to church with her husband Sunday morning before breakfast, a woman's hours are still confined to the home compound and its obligations. The shepherds must still take care of their herds, though some boys may get together for

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

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FIG. 14.—*A group of shepherds*

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FIG. 15.—*Threshing time*

[P.78-B]

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Preferred
[243] cereals cannot be grown here, instead sorghum, finger millet, and white tef (Eragrostis teff; an indigenous, [635] tiny-grained cereal) are produced. Moreover, the civil administration of the kola is less effective than in the highlands. Of the three zones, kola is the most sparse- [162] ly populated, and the only one to contain a substantial [563] indigenous non-Hamitic population. These are a Nilotic [567] people, horticulturalists living on the province's western periphery. Highlanders refer to them by a putative tribal nomer, "Shankella", and, until recent times, obtained their domestic slaves from this population. Even now, Nilotes living in the highlands are popularly known as bariya, "slave".

Weyna dega lands are located between 1800 and 3000 [136] meters. This is parkland beyond the range of the ano- [243] pheles mosquito, and ideal for growing preferred cereals, [231] wheat and red teff. Here, as in the other zones, agriculture is complemented by the raising of sheep, goats, and chickens for food; cattle for meat, milk, and plowing; donkeys to carry burdens across the broken plateau lands; and horses and mules as mounts.

Dega lands are the sections of the plateau which [243] extend beyond the 3000 meter mark. In their lower reaches, wheat and red teff are grown, but at higher altitudes [233] barley is the dominant cereal. The lands above 4000 meters cannot be cultivated, although some are used for grazing.

Literacy, per se, is not the goal of enrollment, but is perceived rather as a pre-requisite for studying the Gospels (wangel), the psalter (dawiyt), and a variety of prayers, pursuant to participating in the Mass (kidasiy) as an ecclesiastic of the parish.

Within a parish, only a minority of households send boys to the church school; these are generally ristenna households, each sending a single priest-candidate in any one generation. Because attendance at the school precludes shepherding, the common lot of young boys, the student's family must find a substitute shepherd for him; a younger sibling is usually available for this task, but, if not, a collateral or even non-kinsman may be obtained. Indeed, the age at which a boy begins his studies (generally, between seven and thirteen years) is often determined by when this substitute can be found. The parish school is suspended, however, during periods of intensive agricultural activities, of harvesting, threshing, and winnowing.

Although considerations of piety influence a man to seek ordination for his son, self-interest generally dominates. The achievement of priesthood validates a family's claims to church lands (yimoskol mariet). If the neophyte's father is himself a priest, his son's ordination means freedom from bothersome performances in the Mass. If the father is not a priest, but anyway